

HUNTING WITH THE BIOGRAPH



Amusing Adventures That Mark the Search for Lively Moving Pictures

That the moving picture exhibition has other uses besides entertaining was shown recently at a biograph studio when a victoria drove up to the door and from it alighted a dignified gentleman who introduced himself, after elaborate excuses, as Monsieur A. Giebert of the French Department of Correction, who was in America studying methods of capital punishment, France desiring to find some more humane manner of putting criminals out of existence than by the guillotine.

Somewhere in his voyaging about M. Giebert had seen a biograph exhibit of the hanging of Mary Rogers, the New England woman who was executed for the murder of her husband, and he was impressed by its power of reproducing the actual scene. He left an order for the set, so that he might illustrate his work on his return.

Such educational calls upon the biograph

of \$10 or so a day and a limit of a single piece of game for your trouble; but I guess it's worth it."

The manager is lost for a moment in the sportsman.

"I've recently returned from New Brunswick, where I carried a biograph outfit and landed a moose. Barrie must have got his idea of the Peter Pan house in the tree-tops from a biograph and moose hunt."

"That is the way you do—build a regular house along some runway, where the animals come to eat the roots of the lily pads which are their favorite diet. You can take your toys into the house and sleep if you are not accustomed to somnambulism, for the hour right after dawn is the time to work."

"Near by are the house of the guide and another where the biograph man has his camera at an angle so that he can get the right focus as the shot is made."

"Perhaps there are more interesting

artist with his outfit is following closely behind him who is working another camera. It is very amusing and gives you a very good idea of the timidity of the deer and the difficulty of getting within range."

"An interesting game series was taken recently on the private fishing grounds of Lord Strathcona. We got the complete view of the landing of a salmon."

"The biograph man has to follow the fisherman in a boat and finds great difficulty in getting a range that will show him the whole fight from start to finish."

"Another time one of the girls hired to depict a similar dramatic episode jumped from the rear of a ferryboat into the North River. This one was a fine swimmer and the boats were near to pick her up, but unfortunately her skirts became entangled and if it had not been for the prompt work of the men stationed there she would certainly have lost her life."

"Lying down on the tracks in front of an approaching train to be rescued at a critical moment by a party of train men is another

method of earning both money and excitement, each provided in a large quantity, for people who risk life and limb, or at least who run the chance of an unpleasant notoriety, demand high salaries, and get them."

"At the big Holloway farm near East Orange we had an amusing fox hunt and a pack of hounds took part in it, while our staff were arrayed like the tulips of the garden, in pink coats and fine linen."

"We had the whole place at our disposal and even had a genuine fox, which, however, was not allowed the freedom of the place but was concealed in a basket held on the arm of one of the character artists who impersonated an old woman just returning from market."

"She was given a good start and then the hounds and the party gave a view halloo and after they scoured. She climbed at new walls, and scaled up one side and down another of a hay rick, she forded streams and jumped ditches."

"Finally she was cornered and the chase ends in well portrayed disgust as the sportsman sees what they have been pursuing all day. The next amusing part of this episode was that a lot of genuine sportsmen had tagged along to get a try at the brush."

"If any one should ever write a complete biography of the biograph it would read like one of Nick Carter's yellowbacks."

"FISHERMEN'S LUCK."

The not infrequent result comes in a rather unusual way.

Two big and hearty Germans bent on fishing hired a skiff at Coney Island Creek near the trolley bridges. Into the skiff they put their fishing tackle, bait, paper box of sandwiches and other eatables, and a case of bottled beer.

They drifted down on the outgoing tide until they were near the Harway avenue bridge. There they met a launch coming up from Gravesend Bay and hailed it with:

"How is der fishing outside?"

The reply was that the bay was so rough that no small boat could live there, and that no fishermen were thinking of going out.

"Maybe we don't better try it," said one of the Germans to the other. "I guess we tie up here by der bridge, and maybe we catch some snappers or sonedings."

By this time the boat had drifted on until it was beneath the span of the lift bridge, and while one of them made fast the painter to a brace beneath the bridge girder, the other fisherman got out some of the beer. They sampled the beer while rigging their hands and baiting.

After dropping their lines overboard they filled their pipes, half hitched the lines around the tholepins and had some more beer. Thus the two fishermen fished and smoked and talked and drank the beer until the restfulness of the situation made them drowsy, and they fell into a peaceful slumber.

A steam tug that had come up on the first of the ebb tide after a Coney Island garbage scow whistled for the bridge to be opened. The bridge tender, aware of the presence of the drowsy fishermen, and of the fact that the lift span, answered the call and the span began to rise slowly and noisily.

The bow of the fishermen's boat went up with it, and when the nose of the boat was about three feet out of the water one of the fishermen awoke. Seeing the painter taut and the boat an angle he cried:

"Gott in Himmel, how dot tide is falling! Wake up, Yawkob, der tide is going over!"

But before Jacob could wake up the boat hung nearly perpendicular from the rising span, and Jacob, followed by the other fisherman, and all the other contents of the skiff, including his fellow fisherman, slid over the stern seat into the creek.

Fortunately both of the men could swim, and they caught the bobstay of a brick schooner lying just below the bridge. From this point of vantage they saw their skiff dangling about twenty feet above the water.

"Maybe we don't better wait here, Yawkob, until she comes down, ain't it?" said Jacob's friend, realizing the situation.

The tug had steamed through and the lift of the bridge was descending. When the stern of the skiff settled into the water the boat filled, and when the span came to rest the skiff floated with her gunwales awash.

The men swam to the boat, untied the painter and worked her up on a shoving beach at the north end of the bridge. There they got the water out of her, and, with a piece of board for a paddle, they picked up the best of the bulkhead near the garbage station they were discussing the probability of their having recovered the remainder of the case of beer if they had dredged for it.

celerity you wouldn't have believed possible from their dignity and age, if you hadn't seen it."

"We had a similar difficulty with a farmer who mistook a biograph kidnapping for the real thing and raised a hue and cry that started the whole village at our heels. This gave the artist an opportunity to get in a very realistic picture of an infuriated mob in action. It is well we had chosen that locality, for if it had taken place out West I suppose they would have added a few bullets to the joy of the occasion."

"Lately, to finish a melodramatic series where a woman exposes the dishonesty of a man who responds by throwing her into a mill pond, we allowed the leading man to bring along a feminine friend who, he said, could do the work and was able to swim. As the pond is a depth of thirty feet naturally we made this accomplishment a necessary part of the contract."

"When we arrived after half a day's journey with our party the girl confessed that she could not swim a stroke, but she pluckily insisted on being thrown in the water, trusting to the stalwart rescuer who, of course, appears on the scene to take her out. He did it all right and the picture was successful, for the struggle of the girl was a real one, but for a few minutes some of us had our hearts in our mouths."

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SKAT THE GAME THIS WINTER.

GERMAN RIVAL THREATENS PRE-EMINENCE OF BRIDGE.

Bridge Teachers Now Giving Lessons in Skat—The Game Approved by King Edward—Features in Which It is Superior to Bridge—How It is Played.

Unless all signs fail, there will be a new candidate for public favor in the line of card games this winter, and that is skat. The word is a German abbreviation of an Italian term in taroc, and is pronounced with the long "a," as if it were spelled "skah."

Any one who has watched the history of cards must have remarked the curious regularity with which the favorites come and go. In 1896, when whist was at the height of its fame, and the annual congress of the American Whist League brought together 830 delegates at the Oriental Hotel from all parts of the United States, and even from England, a writer in THE SUN declared that the day was not far distant when bridge would supersede all other forms of whist. About seven years ago THE SUN announced that bridge was the coming game, although it was still unknown outside a few of the leading clubs, and not a single text book on the subject had been published.

There was a time when euchre was the national game in America, and whist was very little played. When poker was at the height of its popularity among fashionable people and there were fifty-six women's poker clubs meeting in a single uptown hotel in New York, the idea that any game could ever take its place, especially such a simple game as whist, was laughed at. What game was there, people asked, that could touch poker?

But the game came, and it was straight whist, without honors. Years before duplicate whist was heard of whist was the fashionable craze in society. When duplicate came, in 1891, it knocked out whist, a game which is now obsolete.

Ten years ago forty-two papers in the United States were devoting from two to four columns a week to duplicate whist news and notes. Every one said that no game could ever take the place of duplicate, and the few who had ever heard of bridge condemned it as simply a gambling proposition, which would do for an occasional variation from the real game, like piquet or klondike.

Euchre is still a popular game. It is true, but not with the people who demand greater opportunities for intellectual rivalry than such a simple game affords. Euchre has dropped into the second class, and is now a round game, like pinochle.

Poker is still popular, but only as a gambling proposition and behind closed doors. It was never a game which could be used for social or charitable purposes in large gatherings.

Of the forty-two papers that published whist columns ten years ago but two remain, and although the game still flourishes among the clubs that belong to the whist league it is seen only on regular club nights. Before and after the compass game and at all other times the play is bridge. There are still trophy matches and tournaments, but whist has practically disappeared from the social world, and one is never asked to dinner with whist afterward; the game is always bridge.

Bridge is unquestionably the present favorite, and in spite of all that has been written and preached against it card players seem to be bridge mad. The same extravagant assertions of undying popularity are to-day put forward in favor of bridge that were heard years ago about euchre and poker and whist and duplicate.

One continually hears the assertion that there cannot be a better game and that nothing can ever take its place. That is precisely the same thing about duplicate ten years ago. May it not be possible that they are equally in error about bridge?

People love change, and card players are always ready to take up something new, but the standards which have been set by such games as whist and bridge have educated people up to demanding games which offer the fullest opportunities for the exercise of the intellect, and it may safely be said that no game will ever be widely popular in this country in which the mental enjoyment derived from the play of the cards is not more of an object than the mere winning or losing of the game itself.

Games of this high class are not invented in a day, and no absolutely new game has ever become the fashion. It may be comparatively unknown, but it must be matured. It is only the finished product that can ever be a favorite in the first set.

All the great favorites of the past have been old. The origin of euchre is lost in the mists of antiquity. It looks like a variation of the oldest known game of cards, spoil five.

Poker came to America at the time of the French Revolution. The civil war and the introduction of the draw made it popular.

Whist was two hundred years old when America took it up, and had its rage in England a century before. Bridge had been played in Europe for fifty years at least before New York ever heard of it, and it was known in England as far back as 1870.

The fact that a game is already known or has been played for years, is no reason why it should not slip into the front rank and become the fashion. It is not the intrinsic merit of a game that makes it a popular favorite, but some fortuitous combination of circumstances that brings it to the notice of people that have influence and following in such matters.

The favorite at court is never a newborn baby, but some one that is picked out from the throng that always surrounds the throne. Every game has its day, and there may be games now but little known which will be all the rage in the years to come.

Some of these games with possibilities could be named, but the visible cloud upon the card playing horizon now is skat. No bigger than a man's hand perhaps, but full of portent for the future.

It is not a new game, and it is not by any means unknown. There are 30,000 skat players in this country to-day, with a well organized league, which has held annual congresses since 1903. At the last meeting, held in Buffalo in July, more than 2,000 players assembled from all parts of the country, and they had automobiles for prizes in the tournament.

But people will never give up bridge for skat, say the bridge enthusiasts.

That is what they said a few years ago about giving up whist for bridge. Those who have a hand on the pulse of the card playing public know better.

From whist and bridge clubs in widely separated cities—Buffalo, Boston, Indianapolis, Rochester, Chicago, Toronto and Memphis—comes the information that bridge is gradually giving way to skat, and that those who have got far enough into the game to see its fine points will not play bridge, but will get some of skat.

One of the best known women teachers of bridge in New York was asked what she thought of skat.

"Well," she said, "I had fourteen classes at a watering place near Boston this summer. They were organized to learn bridge, or rather to perfect themselves in that game; but they all took up skat instead. The best woman bridge player I know, who lives in Buffalo, won't touch the game if she can get skat. I expected to teach bridge in New York all this winter, but I find they want skat. In fact, they are crazy for it when once they get to know it."

A well known man teacher of whist and bridge and the author of more than twenty books on card games was asked the other day what he thought about skat.

"While I have played skat for years," he said, "and belong to both the German and the American skat leagues, my attention was first called to the possibilities of the game by a story told me by Lady — in London last spring. It appears that some people at a dinner party were praising the attractions of bridge in the presence of the King, when the King remarked that he thought skat was the better game."

"I quite agree with the King that in some respects skat is a better game. In fact, it has several points in its favor that no other game can boast of."

"To begin with, it is one of the few really good games for three players; but if there are four or five candidates they can all play, and even six may make up a table. This is infinitely better than whist or bridge, in which if there are not exactly four it is either impossible to play, or some one must sit out and watch the game all through a rubber. In skat a newcomer never has to wait for a seat, and the game is finished any time you want to stop."

"Skat does not require the gambling element to make it interesting, like bridge or poker. In bridge you must play for money, or there would be no restraint on the declarations."

"No matter how rash the make may be in bridge it is possible to pull off; but in skat it is useless to overbid your hand, because you know in advance that you must lose. In bridge you declare with a view to winning as much money as possible; in skat you declare in order to get the privilege of playing."

"In the one you must declare, win or lose, in the other you declare only when you have the odds in your favor."

"Many of the elements that make bridge so popular are to be found in skat, such as the sole responsibility for the result of the declaration resting with the player who names the trump, and the combination of two adversaries against him. But in skat there is the added interest that the adversaries are not always the same pair, as they are in bridge. With a table of four skat players there are no less than nine different ways in which one player, naming the trump, may be opposed to a different partnership."

"In bridge there are only two games, trumps and no trumps, and there is only one way of selecting them—to name them. In skat there are seven games, and there are three different ways of selecting them, considerable judgment being required in the choice of methods."

As to the game itself, there seems to be a general but mistaken impression that it is complicated and difficult to learn. Judging from the description of it, this idea of the game must be a mistaken one.

Both the teachers quoted above insist that if the game is properly presented to the pupil it is easily mastered in ten lessons of an hour each, and at the end of that time any person of ordinary intelligence will be a better skat player than the majority of those who have simply picked up the game, even if they have played it for years.

Skat is played with a pack of thirty-two cards, all below the seven being thrown out. As in all German games, the 10 ranks next to the ace, and then come the K Q J 8 7. The four jacks are always the best cards in the pack, no matter what the trump suit may be.

There are never more than three active players in each deal, although four or five may sit at the same table and take their turns to become active players. Each individual is for himself and the final result is an individual score. Each deal is practically a complete game in itself, but it is usual to finish a round so that each may have dealt an equal number of times.

Any one can have the first deal, after which it passes in order to the left. The cards are given out three at a time for the first round, then two are laid aside, face down, for the skat; then four more to each player, and finally three, so that each hand consists of ten cards.

When four play, the dealer takes no cards. When five play, he gives to the two on his left and the one on his right.

There are several varieties of game to be played, and the players bid against one another for the privilege of saying what the game shall be. The one offering to play the game which will win or lose the greatest number of points having the choice.

This bidding is done by naming the figure value of a game, such as twelve, sixteen or thirty, as the case may be. If no one bids, the player on the dealer's left has the right to name the game.

Any bids are made to him first by the player on his left. If he has a game worth as much himself, he says so and the other must bid higher or pass. The survivor of the last bidding is then open to bids from the third man, who must offer higher than the last bid or pass.

The successful bidder, who is called the player, can name as much more expensive a game as he pleases, but he cannot name a cheaper one. If the bid on which he holds it is twenty, he must play a game worth at least twenty.

Having stated what he is going to play, the two others become partners against him for that deal, but there is no change in the original lead, which is always with the player on the dealer's left. Players must follow suit if they can, but there is no obligation to win a trick or to lead any particular suit.

There are three kinds of game to be played and three ways of playing them. The successful bidder can play with a whole suit for trumps as well as the four jacks, or with only the jacks as trumps, or with no trumps at all.

He can also determine in three different ways what the trump shall be, by taking both the skat cards into his own hand and then picking out the trump; by turning up whichever skat card he pleases, the suit it belongs to being the trump; or by leaving the skat cards alone and declaring on his original ten cards.

If he means a suit for trumps it is to his advantage to pick out the one that will give him the most points, if he has a choice; because the suits vary in value, just as they do in bridge, clubs being the best, spades next, then hearts and diamonds. Clubs is the best of the suits.

As the four jacks are always the best trumps there are eleven cards in the trump suit, and only seven in each of the plain suits. These jacks outrank one another just as the suits do, the club jack being the best card in the pack. When jacks are the only trumps the plain suits are all equal, so that there are four plain suits of seven cards each, and a trump suit of four cards, all equal; but the jacks still outrank one another.

The object of the game is not to win a certain number of tricks, but to get a certain number of points in the tricks won. These points are reckoned by giving the five highest cards in each suit a fixed value.

The ace counts 11, the ten 10, the king 4, the queen 3 and the jack 2. The 7, 8 and 9 have no value.

There being four suits with 30 points in each, there are 120 in the pack, and the successful bidder, who names the game, must get home the majority of this 120, that is, 61 or more, or he loses his game.

The amount won by a player when he wins his game by getting home 61 or more points in his tricks depends on two things, the suit and manner of its selection and the number of trumps he holds, or does not hold, in unbroken sequence with the club jack. To the number of this sequence is always added 1 for winning the game.

To illustrate: Let us suppose that the trump selected was a club, which the player named without touching the skat cards. The unit value of this game is 12. Let us suppose further that the player held the jack of clubs and jack of spades; but that his opponents held the jack of hearts. Then his sequence of trumps, matadores they are called, stopped at 2, to which he adds 1 for winning his game. The unit value of the club solo, 12, is therefore to be multiplied by 3 and the player wins 3x12=36 points.

Knowing that he was going to play a club solo if he was the successful bidder, and knowing that he held two matadores, it is obvious that he knew in advance that his game would be worth 36 points if he could name clubs and win it; therefore he was able to bid anything up to that figure for the privilege of naming the game to be played.

Had any other player offered more than 36 points for the club solo, he would have had to stop bidding, because if he overbid your hand you lose what you would have had to win to make your bid good.

When the player wins his game from all the others at the table, whether they hold cards or not, if he loses he loses to all at the table.

When a player has a very bad hand he may bid for a null, which is the same as a misère in other games. In a null there are no trumps, no matadores, and no values for the cards. The cards rank as at whist, and if the player takes a single trick he loses his game.

When one gets into the finer strategy of the game many opportunities will be found for good play. There are conventional leads and returns, just as in bridge, and rules for the proper management of certain combinations of cards, all of which must be mastered by the expert.

There is just enough of the element of luck to make the game interesting to the novice and to insure a chance for the beginner. The game is full of the most delightful surprises, which are a refreshing change from the deadly monotony of the inevitable hand that one continually sees at the bridge table.

The difference between the expression on the faces of a party of skat players and that on those at the bridge table is alone sufficient to convince any unprejudiced spectator that bridge is getting on the nerves of its devotees, while the skat players thoroughly enjoy themselves.

It is a jolly game, with lots of life and excitement in it, and no one who has ever played it long enough to understand it thoroughly was ever known to give it up.

AS TO CARBUNCLES.

Not the Precious Stone of That Name, but the So-called Poor Can Have.

"A carbuncle," said a man of all over weary aspect, "is supposed to belong to the booby family, but it is to the ordinary plain adult booby as a complete demonstration of the binomial theorem is to $x + y$."

"Job had boils," he went on, "and was patient, but it is not set forth in the Scriptures or in any secular work, nor is it ventured in the wildest fiction, that any man ever had a carbuncle and was patient—except as he was a doctor's patient. We are told that the dogs came and licked the boils of Job; if Job had had carbuncles he would have licked the dogs."

"A carbuncle," continued the man with a seriously scientific look, "is a sort of inverted boil—a boil over, so to speak. A boil if left to itself will cure itself by maturing and eventually disappearing, but a carbuncle, instead of coming to a head, keeps burrowing deeper and deeper, and it matures about the time your old fashioned life insurance policy matures."

"Now, this little pet," said the man, looking at a bulge near the elbow of his left coat sleeve, "is a healthy carbuncle in the prime of its existence. You needn't feel of the back of your necks, gentlemen. Whenever two or three or more persons are gathered together and one of them says 'carbuncle,' half the others begin to feel for the scars on the backs of their necks and get ready to butt in with their experiences."

"But they have studied their carbuncles only dully with a hand glass. To know a carbuncle intimately—that is, anywhere nearly as well as the carbuncle knows you—it should be in a local accessible to the eye, on an elbow, for instance."

"One of Job's successors in the boil line remarked humorously that the best place to have a boil is on the nose; but no man with a carbuncle could be so human as to wish it on any one other fellow, though he might wish it could be divided up between ten or a dozen men."

"This little pet," resumed the man at the point where he had interrupted himself, "has the clear pedigree